

# **J.R. Alford Greenway**

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Prepared by:

**Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department**

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**J.R. ALFORD GREENWAY**

**ACQUISITION AND RESTORATION COUNCIL (ARC) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**LEAD AGENCY:** Leon County  
Division of Parks and Recreation

**COMMON NAME OF PROPERTY:** J.R. Alford Greenway

**LOCATION:** Leon County, Florida

**ACREAGE TOTAL:** 874.2 acres

**ACREAGE BREAKDOWN:**

<u>Land Cover Classification</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Upland Mixed Forest	159.6
Upland Hardwood Forest	227.2
Basin Marsh	9.4
Basin Swamp	49.2
Pasture	233.8
Old Fields	106.1
Pond	1.0

**LEASE AGREEMENT NUMBER:** 4308

**USE:** Single

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation	Multi-use Trail System

**DESIGNATED LAND USE:** Multi-use Trail System and other  
Passive Recreation Uses.

**SUBLEASE:** 4308-01 (Leon County)

**ENCUMBRANCES:** None

**TYPE OF ACQUISITION(S) :** Preservation 2000

**UNIQUE NATURAL FEATURES:**

The J.R. Alford Greenway, approximately 874 acres in size, was purchased through the state Office of Greenways and Trails program by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund under the Preservation 2000 program, leased to the Florida Department of

Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails, and subleased to Leon County in May 2001. Of the total 874 acres, approximately 387 acres (44%) are comprised of forested uplands, 60 acres (7%) are wetlands, with the remaining 340 acres (39%) in pasture land or open fields.

There is one, small, permanent waterbody directly within the Greenway approximately one acre in size which is normally wet. There are also approximately 60 acres of various forested wetlands, and there also are several small intermittent watercourses that are normally dry.

Although Florida Natural Areas Inventory records did not include any listed plant and animal species element occurrence records in or near the Greenway, a recent ecological assessment of this property found several observed listed species on the greenway, including the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and the Southern lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*). Several additional listed species are expected to occur on this property, based on existing and potential habitat. A significant number of non-listed animal and plant species presently occur on the Greenway, and there are also a number of exotic, nuisance, or invasive plant species.

Unique natural features within the Greenway include a mosaic of open pasture and old fields across rolling topography, with native forest and bottomland habitat surrounding these features at the lower elevations.

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL FEATURES:**

A recent (2002) archaeological survey of the J.R. Alford Greenway inventoried 12 archaeological sites and three archaeological occurrences. Of these, five sites were identified in an earlier survey, and were reviewed (and some locations adjusted) in the most recent survey. Of the 12 sites and three occurrences, five sites were recommended for preservation and additional testing. All proposed improvements have been planned and placed to accommodate these recommendations.

#### **MANAGEMENT NEEDS:**

The management goals for the multi-use J.R. Alford Greenway include the protection of existing natural, cultural, and archaeological features and resources of this property, including wildlife and its habitat, for the people of Leon County and the State of Florida. Furthermore, the management of this Greenway will include ecological restoration, physical connection to the Lake Lafayette system and the countywide Greenway system, and the provision of sustainable public access, including resource-based recreation, environmental and archaeological education, and natural features study and enjoyment.

#### *Objectives*

The following objectives will guide the use of the J.R. Alford Greenway:

1. All natural resources, including upland and aquatic vegetation, surface water features, and wildlife and its habitat, will be protected and conserved, consistent with land stewardship guidelines and schedules;
2. All archaeological resources will be identified and protected;

3. Facilities and other enhancements will be constructed where appropriate, using existing dirt roads, paths, fields, and other non-sensitive features as available, to encourage comfortable, safe, and enjoyable use of the trails, views, waterfront, and other natural and cultural resources by all citizens, including the disabled or others with special needs;
4. Ecological restoration activities will be encouraged, including the replanting of native plant species where appropriate and the restoration of surface water features and ecotones within the Greenway;
5. Resource-based (“passive”), non-motorized, recreational activities will be allowed and encouraged, consistent with the sustainable protection of all natural, cultural, and archaeological features on the Greenway;
6. Educational programs will be encouraged that focus on the natural features and cultural uses of this property, including the identification of native trees, indigenous and migratory birds and waterfowl, and the ecology of plants and animals in this area; and
7. The Greenway will be connected to, and managed as part of, the overall Lake Lafayette system and the countywide Greenway system, including the Lake Lafayette Heritage Trail park.

The J.R. Alford Greenway is a large greenway in the urban fringe of Tallahassee with significant habitat, rolling topography, and scenic views. It is also located within a growing urban residential area. Existing and future special management considerations include, but are not limited to, access, prescribed burning, and trail and other facility use conflicts.

Recommended management practices for plant and animal communities and other Greenway resources are provided in detail in the Forest Stewardship Management Plan for the Greenway. At this time, there are minimal improvements to the property. These include perimeter fencing and a natural surface parking area approximately one acre in size at the Pedrick Road entrance, with a wooden pole fence, signage, and a portable toilet. The existing open fields are being mowed on a regular basis, and several flocks of sheep have recently overwintered on the Greenway. Ongoing, resource-based recreational activities include hiking, bicycling, birdwatching, and picnicking.

Planned improvements for the Greenway include the following:

- an unpaved parking area at Pedrick Road with a main entrance gate, two fenced vehicular parking areas, restrooms, information kiosk, signage, picnic tables, trash cans, water fountain and watering trough, and a small, wooden gazebo or shelter;
- multi-use, unpaved loop trails that will meander and traverse much of the Greenway, and will connect to the Lafayette Heritage Trail and to the Goose Creek ;
- trail benches and interpretive signage at scenic vistas and other locations;
- wildlife observation decks and boardwalks overlooking several wetland areas and water features, including Alford Arm;
- planting of native trees and vegetation and removal of exotic trees and other plants; and
- construction of bird houses, bat houses and other wildlife attractors.

Additional non-recreational improvements include water and electrical service<sup>1</sup> and portable toilet facilities for each trailhead. A public telephone will be installed at each established parking area within the Greenway. At least one public drinking water fountain will be installed at the Pedrick Road trailhead parking area.

**ACQUISITION NEEDS/ACREAGES:** None

**SURPLUS LAND/ACREAGE:** None

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT:**

The required public advisory group met at least six times over the course of several months to provide input and respond to draft versions of the management plan.

An advertised public meeting to present preliminary plans and to solicit and discuss suggestions for activities and uses within the Greenway was held on May 29, 2002 at the Buck Lake Elementary School in Leon County. A summary of recorded comments and suggestions from this meeting is provided in Appendix B. A public hearing was held on January 28, 2003 at the Leon County Courthouse as part of a regularly scheduled Leon County Board of County Commissioners meeting.

A proposed Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway, an incorporated non-profit group, would be the principal citizens committee providing input into the creation, design, and eventual use of the Greenway. The purpose of this group would be to promote broad community participation in the development of the J.R. Alford Greenway as a park and trail facility; to promote recreational, educational and alternative transportation uses for the facility; and to provide assistance to Leon County for its management and operational plans.

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<sup>1</sup> An existing power line and water well is located on the property.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The J.R. Alford Greenway, approximately 874 acres in size, is located in Leon County, Florida and forms a peninsula between Lake Lafayette and Alford Arm. This property, annexed in 2001 by the City of Tallahassee, is currently accessible from Pedrick Road (Map 1). This property was purchased through the state Office of Greenways and Trails program by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund under the Preservation 2000 program, leased to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways and Trails, and subleased to Leon County in May 2001.

Of the total 874 acres, approximately 387 acres (44%) are comprised of forested uplands, 60 acres (7%) are wetlands, with the remaining 340 acres (39%) in pasture land or open fields.

There is one waterbody directly within the Greenway approximately one acre in size which is normally wet. There are also approximately 60 acres of various forested wetlands, and there also are several small intermittent watercourses that are normally dry. The property is surrounded on the eastern and southern sides by Alford Arm and Lake Lafayette, respectively. A significant portion of the property is within Alford Arm, and comprises approximately 97.4 acres, or 11 percent of the Greenway area.

Although Florida Natural Areas Inventory records did not include any listed plant and animal species element occurrence records in or near the Greenway, a recent ecological assessment of this property found several observed listed species on the greenway, including the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and the Southern lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*). Several additional listed species are expected to occur on this property, based on existing and potential habitat. A significant number of non-listed animal and plant species presently occur on the Greenway, and there are also a number of exotic, nuisance, or invasive plant species.

Unique natural features within the Greenway include a mosaic of open pasture and old fields across rolling topography, with native forest and bottomland habitat surrounding these features at the lower elevations.

## **PROJECT PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This plan serves as the basic statement of policy and direction for the management of the J.R. Alford Greenway as a unit of Leon County's park system. It identifies the objectives, criteria, and standards used to guide all aspects of park administration, and sets forth the specific measures that will be implemented to meet management objectives. This plan is intended to meet the requirements of Section 253.034 and 259.032, Florida Statutes, Chapter 18, Florida Administrative Code, and to be consistent with the State Lands Management Plan. All development and resource alteration encompassed in this plan is subject to the granting of all appropriate permits, easements, licenses, and other required legal instruments. Approval of this management plan does not constitute an exemption from complying with all applicable local, state, or federal regulations.

The plan describes the natural and cultural resources of the Greenway, as well as a description of their proposed uses and facilities. Resource management problems and needs are identified, and specific management objectives are established. The latter provides guidance on the application

of such measures as prescribed burning, exotic species removal, and restoration of natural conditions.

### **Goal & Objectives**

The management goals for the multi-use J.R. Alford Greenway include the protection of existing natural, cultural, and archaeological features and resources of this property, including wildlife and its habitat, for the people of Leon County and the State of Florida. Furthermore, the management of this Greenway will include ecological restoration, physical connection to the Lake Lafayette system and the countywide Greenway system, and the provision of sustainable public access, including resource-based recreation, environmental and archaeological education, and natural features study and enjoyment.

The following objectives will guide the use of the J.R. Alford Arm Greenway:

1. All natural resources, including upland and aquatic vegetation, surface water features, and wildlife and its habitat, will be protected and conserved, consistent with land stewardship guidelines and schedules;
2. All archaeological resources will be identified and protected;
3. Facilities and other enhancements will be constructed where appropriate, using existing dirt roads, paths, fields, and other non-sensitive features as available, to encourage comfortable, safe, and enjoyable use of the trails, views, waterfront, and other natural and cultural resources by all citizens, including the disabled or others with special needs;
4. Ecological restoration activities will be encouraged, including the replanting of native plant species where appropriate and the restoration of surface water features and ecotones within the Greenway;
5. Resource-based (“passive”), non-motorized, recreational activities will be allowed and encouraged, consistent with the sustainable protection of all natural, cultural, and archaeological features on the Greenway;
6. Educational programs will be encouraged that focus on the natural features and cultural uses of this property, including the identification of native trees, indigenous and migratory birds and waterfowl, and the ecology of plants and animals in this area; and
7. The Greenway will be connected to, and managed as part of, the overall Lake Lafayette system and the countywide Greenway system, including the Lake Lafayette Heritage Trail park.

### **Public Participation**

During the planning process, all potential outdoor recreation uses were considered, and those determined to be most appropriate and consistent with the goals and objectives of the use of this property are discussed within this plan. It was also determined through the planning process that secondary/multiple management uses such as commercial mining, silviculture, agriculture, or other uses would not be compatible and would interfere with the primary project purposes of outdoor recreation and conservation. (Limited silviculture and agricultural activities such as

timber thinning and haying of fields as necessary for management purposes as described in this management plan may occur at the discretion of the Greenway manager.)

The potential for generating revenue to enhance management was also analyzed. It was determined that there may be some opportunities such as hay grass production and food or other concessions (e.g., bicycle or horse rentals) in the future. However, these activities will be employed on a case-by-case basis as a means of supplementing greenway management funding. Concessions will be limited at this time to special events or other temporary, self-contained, mobile concessions. Other funds will be sought through public and private source grants.

The use of private land managers to facilitate restoration and management of this unit was also analyzed. There may opportunities for this in the future; however, decisions regarding these management activities (e.g., mitigation, timber management, removal of exotic species, habitat restoration, etc.) will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The required public advisory group met at least six times over the course of several months to provide input and respond to draft versions of the management plan.

An advertised public meeting to present preliminary plans and to solicit and discuss suggestions for activities and uses within the Greenway was held on May 29, 2002 at the Buck Lake Elementary School in Leon County. A summary of recorded comments and suggestions from this meeting is provided in Appendix B. A public hearing was held on January 28, 2002 at the Leon County Courthouse as part of a regularly scheduled Leon County Board of County Commissioners meeting.

A proposed Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway, an incorporated non-profit group, would be the principal citizens committee providing input into the creation, design, and eventual use of the Greenway. The purpose of this group would be to promote broad community participation in the development of the J.R. Alford Greenway as a park and trail facility; to promote recreational, educational and alternative transportation uses for the facility; and to provide assistance to Leon County for its management and operational plans.

### **Public Advisory Group**

Section 259.032(10)(b), Florida Statutes, requires an advisory group composed, at a minimum, of representatives of the lead land managing agency, comanaging entities, local private property owners, the appropriate soil and water conservation district, a local conservation organization, and a local elected official, to provide input into the management plan (for parcels over 160 acres). The original members of the advisory group is as follows:

Affiliated:

1. John King – Buck Lake Alliance
2. Don Abel – Buck Lake Alliance
3. John Kalin – Gulf Winds Track Club
4. Bob Henderson – Apalachee Audubon Society
5. Chris Littlefield – Southern Trailriders Association (STA)
6. Linda Vause – STA
7. Fred Roesel – Avondale Homeowners Association
8. Joseph Haley – Tallahassee Astronomical Assoc.
9. Kent Wimmer – Florida Trails Assoc.
10. John Webb – Capital City Cyclists
11. Stan Rosenthal – University of Florida/Leon County Cooperative Extension Service
12. Will Sheftall – University of Florida/Leon County Cooperative Extension Service
13. Heather Pence – Florida Department of Environmental Protection/Office of Greenways and Trails
14. Chuck Goodheart – City of Tallahassee Department of Parks and Recreation
15. Stephen Hodges – Tallahassee – Leon County Planning Department
16. Paul Cozzie – Leon County Division of Parks & Recreation
17. Bob McCormick – Professional Disc Golfers Association

Citizen Members:

18. Linda Rackleff
19. Pam Murphree
20. Roger Bell
21. Dan Fortunas
22. Paul Newell
23. Jill Alford
24. Paul Downing
25. Charles Hardee

## NATURAL RESOURCES

An ecological assessment of the J.R. Alford Greenway was published in 2001 by URS, a consulting firm in Tallahassee, Florida, for the Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation. Although not strictly a Natural Features Inventory as required by local city ordinance to secure permits for physical improvements, this assessment includes a description and lists of physical characteristics, soils, vegetated habitats and aquatic resources, and “unique natural features and outstanding native landscapes.”

The 2001 Ecological Assessment describes all vegetated habitats and aquatic resources on the Greenway. These include upland hardwood forest, basin marsh/swamp, pasture/old fields, and lake marsh. Of the total 874 acres, approximately 387 acres (44%) are comprised of forested uplands, 60 acres (7%) are wetlands, with the remaining 340 acres (39%) in pasture land or open fields.

The 2001 Ecological Assessment also describes listed species and other wildlife observations. As a part of the assessment, the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) database was queried for element occurrence records. Although FNAI records did not include any listed plant and animal species element occurrence records within the Greenway, the 2001 Ecological Assessment of this property observed several listed species on the greenway, including the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and the Southern lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*). Several additional listed species are expected to occur on this property, based on existing and potential habitat. A significant number of non-listed animal and plant species presently occur on the Greenway, and there are also several exotic, nuisance, or invasive plant species within the Greenway. A complete list of assessed features, including flora and fauna, is included in Appendix D.

Unique natural features within the Greenway include a mosaic of open pasture and old fields across rolling topography, with native forest and bottomland habitat surrounding these features at the lower elevations.

A Forest Stewardship Management Plan has been prepared for the Greenway by Stan Rosenthal of the University of Florida/Leon County Cooperative Extension Service and Wayne Harris of the Florida Wildlife Commission. This management plan includes a complete description of existing natural resources, including natural communities and exotics, and Best Management Practices and schedules for protecting and enhancing these communities.

The J.R. Alford Greenway is not within an Aquatic Preserve or a designated Area of Critical State Concern or an area under study for such designation. However, Lower Lake Lafayette and Alford Arm, the two waterbodies bordering the greenway, have been recently added to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s adopted 2002 Verified List of Impaired Waters for the St. Marks and Ochlockonee Rivers – Group 1 Basin. These additions are based on low water levels and elevated levels of nutrients such as phosphorus from urban and residential stormwater runoff, resulting in over-nutrication, low levels of dissolved oxygen, and increased Biological Oxygen Demand from increased surface and aquatic vegetation and bottom muck. The addition of these waterbodies to the Impaired Waters list means that FDEP will develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limit for indicated pollutants. A TMDL represents the maximum amount of pollutant loading that can be discharged to a water body and have its designated uses

be met. The final step in this process will be the development, by watershed stakeholders and DEP, of a Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP). The BMAP will specify the activities, schedule, and funding sources that point and nonpoint source dischargers will undertake to restore the water body. The J.R. Alford Greenway Management Plan will be modified as necessary in the future to be consistent with a BMAP for these waterbodies.

## Soils<sup>2</sup>

Soil classes occurring on the Greenway include Albany loamy sand; Blanton, Lucy, Ocilla, Pelham, and Plummer fine sands; Orangeburg fine sandy loam; and Yonges fine sandy loam (see Table 1 and Map 3).

Albany loamy fine sand is a somewhat poorly drained, nearly level soil (0-2% slopes) on lower elevations of uplands. The water table reaches 12 to 30 inches below the soil surface for 1 to 2 months of the year but the upper soil layers usually have very low available water capacity. Albany soil's natural fertility is low.

The Blanton fine sand soil is a nearly level to gently sloping soil on moderately well drained uplands. Slopes are 0-5%. Natural fertility is low.

Lucy fine sand is a well-drained soil on upland ridges and hillsides. Slopes vary from 0-5%. Natural fertility is low.

Ocilla fine sand is a somewhat poorly drained, nearly level soil on moderately low uplands. Ocilla soil has a water table within a depth of 15 to 30 inches for 2 to 6 months. Slopes range from 0-2% and are slightly convex. Natural fertility is low.

Pelham fine sand is a poorly drained nearly level soil on broad flatwoods, in depressional areas and in some drainage ways on uplands. Slopes range from 0-2%. The water table is within 15 inches of the soil surface for 3-6 months in most years. Natural fertility is low.

The Plummer fine sand is a poorly drained nearly level soil that is in low areas and poorly defined drainage ways. The water table is within 15 inches of the soil surface for 3-6 months in most years. Natural fertility is low.

Orangeburg fine sandy loam is a well drained, gently to strongly sloping soil on uplands. The slopes of Orangeburg fine sandy loam vary between 2-5%, 5-8% and 8-12%. Natural fertility is moderate.

Yonges fine sandy loam is a poorly drained hydric soil with a seasonal high water tables within 10 inches of the surface for six months during the year. It is nearly level in low areas and poorly defined upland drainage ways. Natural fertility is moderate.

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<sup>2</sup> From *Soil Survey of Leon County, Florida* (U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service), 1981) and *Ecological Assessment, Leon County – J.R. Alford Greenway* (2001).

Table 1. J.R. Alford Greenway Soils.

Soil Class	Soil Name	Acres	Percent
1	Albany Loamy Sand, 0 to 2 Percent Slopes	10.8	1.2%
5	Blanton Fine Sand, 0 to 5 Percent Slopes	52.8	6.0%
24	Lucy Fine Sand, 0 to 5 Percent Slopes	36.6	4.2%
25	Lucy Fine Sand, 5 to 8 Percent Slopes	55.8	6.4%
32	Ocilla Fine Sand	24.3	2.8%
33	Orangeburg Fine Sandy Loam, 2 to 5 Percent Slopes	178.6	20.4%
34	Orangeburg Fine Sandy Loam, 5 to 8 Percent Slopes	331.6	37.9%
35	Orangeburg Fine Sandy Loam, 8 to 12 Percent Slopes	9.6	1.1%
39	Pelham Fine Sand	5.9	0.7%
41	Plummer Fine Sand	48.1	5.5%
52	Yonges Fine Sandy Loam	22.8	2.6%
99	Submerged	97.4	11.1%
Total		874.3	100.0%

#### Archaeological and Historical Resources

A recent (2002) archaeological survey of the J.R. Alford Greenway inventoried 12 archaeological sites and three archaeological occurrences (see Table 2). Of these, five sites were identified in an earlier survey, and were reviewed (and some locations adjusted) in the most recent survey. Of the 12 sites and three occurrences, five sites were recommended for preservation and additional testing.

#### Water Resources

There is one waterbody directly within the Greenway approximately one acre in size which is normally wet. The property is surrounded on the eastern and southern sides by Alford Arm and Lake Lafayette, respectively. A significant portion of the property is within Alford Arm, a historically wet area, and comprises approximately 97.4 acres, or 11 percent of the Greenway area.

#### Fish and Wildlife Habitat

As previously described, a significant number of non-listed animal and plant species presently occur on the Greenway, and there are also several exotic, nuisance, or invasive plant species within the Greenway. A complete list of assessed features, including flora and fauna, is included in Appendix D. Given the mix of forest and wetland types and open fields, the greenway provides a number of wildlife habitats for mammalian, avian, reptilian, and other faunal species. An application for the greenway to become a unit of the Great Florida Birding Trail has been prepared and submitted to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

### Listed Species

The ecological assessment also describes listed species and other wildlife observations. The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) database was queried for element occurrence records. Although FNAI records did not include any listed plant and animal species element occurrence records in or near the Greenway, the ecological assessment of this property found several observed listed species on the greenway, including the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and the Southern lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*). Several additional listed species are expected to occur on this property, based on existing and potential habitat. A significant number of non-listed animal and plant species presently occur on the Greenway, and there are also several exotic, nuisance, or invasive plant species within the Greenway.

### Beaches and Dunes

There are no beaches or dunes within the Greenway.

### Wetlands

There are also approximately 60 acres of various forested wetlands, and there also are several small intermittent watercourses that are normally dry.

### Mineral Resources

There are no known mineral resources of economic value within the Greenway.

### Unique Natural Features and Outstanding Native Landscapes

Much of the Greenway has been managed for agricultural purposes in the past, including cleared pasture and crops. However, unique natural features within the Greenway include a mosaic of open pasture and old fields across rolling topography, with native forest and bottomland habitat surrounding these features at the lower elevations.

There are several vistas on or near hilly summits on the Greenway where an observer would be as much as 90 feet above Lake Lafayette, a short distance away. Such vistas are rare in north Florida, where trees of various species tend to dominate the landscape and hilly areas are not common.

### Resources Listed by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) database was queried for element occurrence records. Although FNAI records did not include any listed plant and animal species element occurrence records in or near the Greenway.

### Adjacent Land Uses

Additional adjacent land uses to the east and north include low-density residential and vacant property being developed to low-density residential. The property is surrounded on the eastern and southern sides by Alford Arm and Lake Lafayette, respectively. Lake properties on the southern shore and eastern tip of the Greenway are owned by local and state government respectively, while the lake properties on the Alford Arm portion of the lake are privately owned by various parties.

### Potential Ecological and Recreational Linkages

The J.R. Alford Greenway's immediate proximity to Lake Lafayette, Alford Arm, Lake Piney-Z, the Lake Lafayette Heritage Trail, Upper and Lower Lake Lafayette, the Leon County Landfill (proposed to be converted to a park after it reaches its design capacity) and the Kirk Edwards State Wildlife and Environmental Area provides a number of significant ecological and recreational links (see Map 7). The Greenway provides a critical link in a conceptual recreational greenway corridor connecting the City of Tallahassee's Tom Brown Park, Upper Lake Lafayette, and Lake Piney-Z via the new Lake Lafayette Heritage Trail to the Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway via the proposed Buck Lake Greenway. The latter greenway corridor has been identified in the local Blueprint 2000 and Beyond planning document and the draft Tallahassee – Leon County Greenway Master Plan. Other properties along this corridor will include a publicly-owned portion of the new Goose Creek development south of Buck Lake Road, a portion of Welaunee Plantation, and possibly drainage easements between Buck Lake Road and U.S. Highway 90.

Several ecological restoration efforts, both active and planned, address the Lake Lafayette hydrological system. These include land acquisition, park development, removal of invasive plants, and wildlife management activities. A Lake Lafayette Watershed Study is currently underway as of late 2002. This two-phase study, which will be completed sometime in late 2003 or early 2004, will inventory current issues and data, establish surface water management goals, develop and implement a monitoring program, propose and evaluate watershed management alternatives, and develop a management plan for Lake Lafayette and its watershed. This effort will presumably include the J.R. Alford Greenway and its associated management plan.

The most potentially ambitious is a conceptual planning effort through the Department of Environmental Protection to study the feasibility of restoring to a more natural hydrological regime the presently separated components of the Lake Lafayette hydrological system. This would include more actively managing stormwater impacts to Upper Lake Lafayette and its subsurface connections, removing several embankments built across the Alford Arm, and ultimately connecting each waterbody together through a system of control structures and/or by removing existing flow barriers. This planning effort is still in the early stages, and much study and coordination remains to be done before any such actions are proposed.

## **PROPERTY USAGE**

### **Past and Present**

Various tribes of native American Indians have used this region for hunting and gathering and agriculture for approximately ten thousand years. Following European settlement, land in and around the Greenway was used for farming of crops and hunting. This property has in recent times been managed primarily for livestock grazing and occasional hunting. These activities have created large open fields interspersed with thin forested buffers and other forested areas. There are also three embankments or dikes built across Alford Arm. The two northernmost dikes are intact and large enough that a vehicle can be driven across Alford Arm, and this was a common practice of the former owners of the land. A significant portion of each dike is within the property boundary of the greenway, but the two intact dikes are gated.

At this time, the Greenway is being lightly used for recreation, including horseback riding, bicycling, hiking, walking pets, kite flying, picnicking, and other intermittent day uses. No formal restoration activities have taken place, and only a few amenities have been developed, including a small, fenced, parking area.

### **Future Objectives and Uses**

As required by Section 253.043, Florida Statutes, the management goal for the multi-use J.R. Alford Arm Greenway is to protect existing natural, cultural, and archaeological features and resources of this property, including wildlife and its habitat, while allowing and encouraging ecological restoration, connectivity to the Lake Lafayette system and the countywide Greenway system, and sustainable public access, including limited, resource-based recreation, environmental and archaeological education, and natural features study and enjoyment, to the people of Leon County. Furthermore, this property shall be managed for multiple-use purposes, including public access and enjoyment, resource conservation and protection, ecosystem maintenance and protection, and protection of threatened and endangered species. This will be also accomplished through the use of public-private partnerships such as the Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway.

The following objectives will guide the use of the J.R. Alford Arm Greenway:

1. All natural resources, including upland and aquatic vegetation, surface water features, and wildlife and its habitat, will be protected and conserved, consistent with land stewardship guidelines and schedules;
2. All archaeological resources will be identified and protected;
3. Facilities and other enhancements will be constructed where appropriate, using existing dirt roads, paths, fields, and other non-sensitive features as available, to encourage comfortable, safe, and enjoyable use of the trails, views, waterfront, and other natural and cultural resources by all citizens, including the disabled or others with special needs;
4. Ecological restoration activities will be encouraged, including the replanting of native plant species where appropriate and the restoration of surface water features and ecotones within the Greenway;

5. Resource-based (“passive”), non-motorized, recreational activities will be allowed and encouraged, consistent with the sustainable protection of all natural, cultural, and archaeological features on the Greenway;
6. Educational programs will be encouraged that focus on the natural features and cultural uses of this property, including the identification of native trees, indigenous and migratory birds and waterfowl, and the ecology of plants and animals in this area; and
7. The Greenway will be connected to, and managed as part of, the overall Lake Lafayette system and the countywide Greenway system, including the Lake Lafayette Heritage Trail park.

#### *Allowable Uses*

The following uses will be allowed in the Alford Arm Greenway:

1. Picnicking
2. Hiking
3. Off-road (mountain) biking
4. Equestrian riding trails
5. Wildlife observation, including birding
6. Environmental education
7. Running
8. Fishing
9. Canoeing, kayaking, and other non-motorized water craft uses.

#### *Limited Allowable Uses*

The following uses will be allowed in the Alford Arm Greenway subject to certain criteria and the final discretion of the Greenway manager:

1. Group events
2. Competitive events limited to passive, non-motorized, recreational activities only
3. Temporary concessions limited to areas within or near parking areas.
4. Nighttime viewing of astronomical phenomena by organized groups.

#### *Non-allowable Uses*

The following uses will not be allowed in the Alford Arm Greenway:

1. Motorized activities
2. Camping
3. Hunting
4. Unrestrained pets and other domesticated animals.
5. Golf or golf-related activities.

### **Alternative Recreational Uses**

The J.R. Alford Greenway is intended to be a resource-based recreational and conservation-oriented greenway. Alternate recreational uses of this property, including facilities such as athletic fields, were considered, but ultimately rejected based on the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Board that these activities would be too intense, incompatible with resource-based uses, or would require too much land or facilities development to be able to be adequately buffered and managed.

The City of Tallahassee's Electric Utility Department has proposed a new high-voltage transmission line that would connect an existing substation south of Tom Brown Park to a new substation that will be constructed east of the intersection of U.S. Highway 90 East and Interstate 10. This transmission line would require a number of supporting poles 80-100 feet high along a corridor cleared to a minimum of approximately 50 feet. At this time, there is a possibility that the Electric Utility Department will recommend that this transmission line cross the Greenway, either along its border or directly through the property. However, without a definite commitment and route at this time, a detailed description of facilities, impacts, and any mitigation measures cannot be included in this management plan. If the City's Utility Department issues a recommendation that this proposed transmission line cross the Greenway, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails will have to be contacted, as well as the Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation, and a copy of the proposal forwarded to these offices for review.

### **Additional Parcel Acquisition**

A trail connection north from the J.R. Alford Greenway to the Goose Creek public area and to Buck Lake Road is planned. At present, there are three parcels any trail would have to cross in order to provide a link between this public area and the Greenway. One option for providing access to the Goose Creek public area and Buck Lake Road is to secure an access and/or conservation or other easement. If an easement is not sufficient for this purpose, acquisition of one or more parcels or portions thereof may be necessary in order to provide trail-based access to the Goose Creek public area and Buck Lake Road.

### **Surplus Property**

At this time, there are no surplus areas or parcels within the Greenway.

## **MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

### **Authority and Responsibility**

By virtue of the 50-year sublease between DEP and Leon County, the Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation will manage and maintain the Greenway with assistance provided by Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway. Management plans will be developed with the assistance of the Leon County Extension Service for forestry, wildlife and agricultural resources (grasslands), aided by the Division of Parks, Tallahassee – Leon County Planning Department, and other agencies as appropriate and necessary.

### **Coordination**

#### Local Government

Coordination between the City of Tallahassee, the State of Florida, and various units of Leon County will proceed on a regular basis regarding permitting, access, and development of the Greenway and related properties and activities. Although the park is subleased by Leon County from the State of Florida, it is located within the City of Tallahassee, and so the city is responsible for most permitting and review. Specifically, the Leon County Department of Public Works, including its Parks and Recreation, Administration/Transportation Systems, and Operations divisions, will coordinate with the Leon County Cooperative Extension Service, the Leon County School Board, and the Leon County Sheriff's Office to assure appropriate and safe use of the Greenway. Additional coordination will be forthcoming with the Leon County Department of Community Planning, including its Division of Environmental Management.

If the City of Tallahassee's Electric Utility Department proposes that its new high transmission power line should cross the Greenway, there will need to be close coordination between the City, Leon County, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, including the state Office of Greenways and Trails and the Acquisition and Restoration Council to study potential routes and impacts associated with this facility.

#### State

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, provides assistance in the development of wildfire emergency plans, and furnishes permits required for prescribed burning. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission enforces state laws concerning wildlife, freshwater fish, and other aquatic life, and assists in the development of Watchable Wildlife programs. The Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, has the responsibility of tracking and protecting archaeological and historical sites. The Department of Environmental Protection has myriad responsibilities concerning the environment, including the management of state conservation lands. Management and recreational activities within the J.R. Alford Greenway will be coordinated with these agencies as appropriate and necessary.

The state's Office of Greenways and Trails is required to review all proposed construction plans and proposed plans for improvements. All third party agreements for easements, concession agreements or contracts, and all other actions must also be reviewed by OGT prior to their signing.

This management plan will require approval by the Acquisition and Restoration Council and the Governor and Cabinet, sitting as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (Trustees). Approval of this management plan by the Trustees in no way waives the authority and/or jurisdiction of any state or other governmental entity that may have an interest in this project.

All areas subject to facilities development will be surveyed for archaeological and cultural resources and listed species prior to any ground-disturbing activities. Should any archaeological or other unknown historical resources be discovered on the property, the Division of Historical Resources will be immediately contacted.

The ongoing Lake Lafayette Watershed Study will produce a planning and management document that will require coordination between local government and state agencies. This effort will presumably include the J.R. Alford Greenway and its associated management plan. The conceptual planning effort through the Department of Environmental Protection to study the feasibility of restoring to a more natural hydrological regime the presently separated components of the Lake Lafayette hydrological system will require a high degree of planning and coordination between local and state government agencies. However, this planning effort is still in the early stages, and much study remains to be done before any such actions are proposed.

### **Special Management Considerations**

The J.R. Alford Greenway is a greenway with rural spaces and scenic views in an urban fringe area that is mostly being developed residentially. Existing and future special management considerations include, but are not limited to, access, prescribed burning, and trail and other facility use conflicts.

### **Needs and Problems**

The J.R. Alford Greenway is a park purchased to protect significant increasingly rare, undeveloped vistas and other views, open spaces, and forested habitats, and to provide a recreational resource for hikers, bicyclists, equestrians, and other resource-based users. The overall management problem will be to achieve a balance between the preservation of historical and natural features and the increased use of this greenway by recreational users.

The Ecological Assessment conducted for the Greenway identified many significant natural resources. Cultural and historical resources have been identified through a recent archaeological survey. Recommended management practices for plant and animal communities and other Greenway resources are provided in detail in the Forest Stewardship Management Plan for the Greenway. A summary of these practices is provided elsewhere in this plan. Anticipated needs and problems affecting the Greenway are described below.

### **Impacts to and from Adjacent Properties**

Adjacent land uses include vacant and low-density residential. The vacant land is primarily forested, wetland, and surface water areas. Possible impacts to the Greenway are expected from adjacent and nearby neighborhoods and other developments. These include potential biological nuisances such as feral animals, exotic vegetation, camp and other fires, and uncontrolled or

unregulated access to the Greenway, including impacts from motorized recreational vehicles such as motorcycles or ATVs. All of these impacts are not uncommon to large greenways and other natural resource area within Leon County.

The Greenway may also present several potential impacts on adjacent properties. These impacts may include smoke and/or fire from prescribed burning activities; noise, visual, and other potential nuisances from recreational use; and exposure to wild animals not normally inhabiting suburban residential areas (e.g., snakes, alligators, deer).

## **Planned Site Development, Improvements, and Access**

### Existing Improvements and Uses

At this time, there are minimal improvements to the property. These include perimeter fencing and a dirt and gravel parking area approximately one acre in size at the termination of Pedrick Road, with a wooden pole fence, a sign kiosk, and a portable toilet. Other existing facilities include a water well, several concrete water troughs, and a single service electrical power line for the water well pump.

Uses include hiking, bicycling, birdwatching, picnicking, and other resource-based activities. Maintenance activities include waste pickup and the regular mowing of open fields by county personnel or by volunteers.

### Planned Recreational Improvements

#### *General Guidelines*

The following general site development facilities and improvements and general management guidelines are listed by field management unit number as indicated on Map 7. As a general rule, the most intensive uses (e.g., day use, parking, trailheads for all uses) will be concentrated on Field 1, the westernmost field, and the less intensive uses are reserved for more ecologically sensitive portions of the greenway, particularly near waterbodies including Lake Lafayette and Alford Arm. All fields will be accessible via one or more trails, but all trails, existing or new, are to be carefully located, designed, and constructed for minimal impact and maintenance and sustainable use following guidelines provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails, supplemented where consistent by design, construction, and maintenance guidelines provided by the International Mountain Bicycling Association, the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy, and other similar organizations.

As shown on the Conceptual Master Site Plan (Map 9), the majority of existing dirt roads will be stabilized and used as multi-use trails. This will provide a circular main route for hikers, bicyclists, equestrians, and others that encompasses a majority of the property, as well as providing greenway connections between the Lafayette Heritage Trail to the south and west and the Goose Creek conservation area bordering Buck Lake Road to the north. This trail system will provide the primary access to the park, and will provide the least impact to park resources.

An additional, limited system of multi-use, singletrack trails will allow access to additional fields and other resources, with the most sensitive wildlife habitat either trail-less or accessible via foot

only. Those trails which traverse the edges of fields, or are interspersed through areas undergoing reforestation, shall be simple mowed paths. Trails which access the most ecologically sensitive portions of the greenway shall be minimized and limited to hikers only. These trails may be closed by the greenway manager due to seasonal wildlife needs for minimal disturbance.

A signage system will be put into place throughout the greenway, indicating destinations, landmarks, including vistas, and distances. This signage system shall be simple, consistent, and easy to read and understand. It shall also be designed for minimal visual and other environmental impacts.

Any trail design/layout, maintenance, and/or construction activities, voluntary or otherwise, are to be permitted by the greenway manager before these activities are commenced. All areas where significant erosion is occurring, including fields and trails, shall be stabilized using natural materials and Best Management Practices where applicable. All historic and/or archaeological resources shall be protected by fencing or other means as necessary. All landscape and other plantings will be species native to this region, and no exotic ornamental or other plantings will be allowed.

Physical and landscaping improvements to the greenway are summarized below by Management Unit, which includes significant ecological communities, forest stands, habitats, and other features, including fields.

*Improvements by Management Unit (Refer to Map 8)*

### **Field Management Unit 1 (1<sup>st</sup> Field)**

Facilities include the main entrance gate, two fenced vehicular parking areas, restrooms, information kiosk, signage, picnic tables, trash cans, water fountain and watering trough, and a small, wooden gazebo or shelter. The existing access road shall be stabilized so disabled persons can enjoy reasonable access to this field. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.<sup>3</sup>

Native conifers and hardwood trees are to be planted around and near the parking and picnic areas for shade, but the majority of the field will be mowed closely to provide an open area for a variety of activities as allowed. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs.

### **Field Management Unit 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> Field)**

Facilities include a vista sign and a picnic table(s). Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

The upper portion of this field will remain open to preserve the existing vista, and the lower portion will be reforested to maximize natural habitat. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs.

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<sup>3</sup> All bluebird boxes throughout the greenway must be properly maintained on a seasonal basis, including cleaning out and repairing the boxes as necessary during the winter season.

### **Field Management Unit 3 (3<sup>rd</sup> Field)**

Facilities include a vista sign and a picnic table(s). Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

The upper portion of this field will remain open to preserve the existing vista, and the lower portion will be reforested to maximize natural habitat. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs.

### **Field Management Unit 4 (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Fields)**

No facilities other than several open mowed trails will be provided on the western half of this field. Reforestation with longleaf pine and other native community plants for wildlife habitat and to create an open pine savannah will be the primary management activity. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

A vista sign and an observation platform a minimum of 300 feet from the edge of the existing pond downslope will be placed on the eastern half of this field. The observation platform will have a sign describing this natural feature and the wildlife community it supports. A trail will lead to the observation platform. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

The upper portion of this field will remain open to preserve the existing vista, and the lower portions will be reforested to maximize natural habitat. Select trees such as cypress and mulberry shall be planted near the pond for wildlife habitat and food.

### **Field Management Unit 5 (Northeast Field)**

No facilities other than several open mowed trails will be provided. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan. Reforestation with longleaf pine and other native community plants for wildlife habitat will be the primary management activity. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs.

### **Field Management Unit 6 (Pterodactyl Field)**

Facilities include a vista sign and a picnic table(s). An existing powerline and water well will be preserved and maintained for management use. A boardwalk will be constructed in the basin marsh and swamp area in the lower elevations, and this area will be managed for indigenous waterfowl. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

The upper portion of this field will remain open to preserve the existing vista, and the lower portion will be reforested to maximize natural habitat. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs.

### **Field Management Unit 7 (East – West Field)**

No facilities other than simple mowed paths along the edge of the open areas will be provided. This field shall remain open and managed for hay. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

### **Field Management Unit 8 (North Field and Little Cove)**

No facilities other than simple mowed paths along the edge of the open areas will be provided. This field shall remain open and managed for hay. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

### **Field Management Unit 9 (Hidden Field)**

No facilities other than simple mowed paths along the edge of the open areas will be provided. This field shall remain open and managed for hay. The edges of this field are to be 'softened' visually with shrubs, flowers, and other herbs. Bluebird nest boxes will be installed as per instructions in the J.R. Alford Stewardship Plan.

### **Forest Management Units 10 and 11**

Upland mixed and hardwood forests within the greenway will be preserved, and prescribed burns will be conducted every 2-3 years. Other management activities will include removal of exotic plants (which will occur throughout the greenway as necessary).

### **Wetland Management Units 12-14**

These features will be preserved, and management activities will include removal of exotic plants (which will occur throughout the greenway as necessary). Single-use trails will also lead to or pass closely by these features, including a lower trail leading from Field Management Unit #4 east that will lead to an observation platform overlooking a basin marsh and swamp on the easternmost portion of the greenway. A short boardwalk into or along this area will be constructed. This lower trail will be restricted to foot use only.

### **Wetland Management Unit 15**

This feature, which traverses the length of Alford Arm, will be preserved, and management activities will include removal of exotic plants (which will occur throughout the greenway as necessary) and the installation and maintenance of wood duck nest boxes. Three observation platforms with signage will be constructed on or near the historical dikes built across Alford Arm. The dikes themselves will not be removed at this time, but access to them will be controlled

## Other Improvements

Additional, non-recreational improvements include:

1. Water and electrical service and portable toilet facilities for each trailhead
2. A public telephone installed at the established parking area, as well as at least one public drinking water fountain
3. Existing concrete water troughs for cattle will be repaired and restored as necessary for use by equestrians
4. Exotic vegetation shall be controlled and removed as per State of Florida guidelines and procedures.

## Impacts and Mitigation of Planned Improvements

### *Natural Features*

Given the nature of the planned improvements and the varied nature of the Greenway (e.g., a combination of open pastures, forested areas, and rolling hills), it is unlikely that these improvements will have a significant impact on the Greenway. The parking area is unpaved and located in a presently open pastured area, and all multi-use trails will be located away from environmentally sensitive features such as wetlands. Single-use hiking and other trails in sensitive areas will be bridged with boardwalks or other wooden structures, and all other improvements such as fences and observation decks will be built with natural materials with muted colors.

Because the majority of the Greenway is within the City of Tallahassee city limits, most if not all improvements to the Greenway will be in accordance with the City's Environmental Management Ordinance (EMO) and will be subject to specific development permit requirements, including environmental reviews and impact analyses; site planning; and development design standards and review. Under the City's EMO, the following natural features are to be identified and mapped prior to any permitting activities:

### *Preservation Areas:*

- water bodies
- water courses
- undisturbed floodplains
- wetlands
- native forests
- severe grades (greater than 20 percent slope)
- habitats of Endangered, Threatened, and Species of Special Concern, and
- areas of environmental significance

### *Conservation Areas:*

- altered floodplains
- altered floodways
- altered wetlands
- altered water courses and improved elements of the primary drainage system
- high quality successional forests
- significant grades (10-20 percent slope)
- closed drainage basins
- active karst features
- special development zones, and
- canopy roads

The EMO requires Preservation and Conservation features to be placed within conservation easements to be given over the City of Tallahassee. However, these easements may be given to a mutually-agreed upon third party. However, the City of Tallahassee has agreed not to require these features within the Greenway to be placed within conservation easements. Map 4 illustrates all protected environmentally sensitive features.

Other features to be identified include archaeological features and any necessary buffers near or adjacent to Preservation and Conservation Features. In addition, historical and scenic vistas will be protected and managed. All areas subject to facilities development will be surveyed for archaeological and cultural resources and listed species prior to any ground-disturbing activities.

The Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation currently has a Public Works General Permit which addresses development activities in all county parks within the city. This permit allows most minor improvements (e.g., less than one thousand square feet) with the exception of any development activities within Preservation or Conservation features or within the Canopy Road regulatory zone (100 feet from either side of the centerline of a listed Canopy Road in Leon County). The siting of trails and all other improvements will be made with due consideration to all sensitive environmental and cultural resources within the Greenway. In addition, a full-time Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation greenway attendant will monitor human activities and impacts on all natural and cultural resources within the Greenway.

### Access

Except for emergency and maintenance vehicles and special events, vehicle access will be strictly limited to established parking areas/trailheads where parking and future facilities are planned. Special event overflow parking will be identified and provided as necessary. This parking area will avoid preservation and conservation natural features.

Pedestrian and bicycle access to the greenway will only be allowed from vehicle parking areas and access points established by the managing agency. Access to and use of the Greenway by residents of all adjacent neighborhoods will be encouraged and facilitated subject to reasonable controls. The managing agency (Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation) will establish an application and review process for future access from adjacent neighborhoods and roadways.

## **Natural Resource Protection**

### *General Guidelines*

Planned improvements such as trails, fencing, and signage will be designed and built in order to help protect environmentally sensitive features, including wildlife and wildlife habitat. Other management tools and policies such as designated parking areas and a prohibition against motorized vehicles on any of the trails will also be used to help protect these features. Resource identification will be provided by signage and field guides to inform the public about all Greenway natural resources.

### Soil and Water Resources

Soil and water resources within the Greenway will be protected by: (1) conservation and active management within the guidelines of the J.R. Alford Greenway Forest Stewardship Management Plan of existing forest and other vegetation communities within the Greenway; (2) limiting development within the Greenway to passive recreational facilities; and (3) strict adherence to all permit requirements during construction of any recreational facilities. In regard to the latter, erosion controls are required for all significant construction activities, and use of these erosion controls will help prevent soil from being eroded into any water bodies or water courses within the Greenway. All severe and significant grades will be protected from intensive development by placement of these features into conservation easements.

### Biology

A survey of vegetation and animal species and migratory birds, as well as identification of any listed species, will be conducted during the first year of park operation. This will be conducted by trained personnel from the Leon County Department of Community Development's Division of Growth and Environmental Management with assistance from the City of Tallahassee and various state agencies, nongovernmental conservation and other organizations, and individual volunteers.

### Exotic Plant and Animal Removal

Forested upland and adjacent forested wetland areas in the Greenway were reviewed by the Leon County Division of Environmental Management for the presence of any invasive plant species listed by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council. Their findings are included in Appendix H. A number of species of exotic plants were identified on the Greenway. Each invasive has different recommended methods for management and removal, each of which should be consistent with state standards and practices for conservation and other state lands. State grants will be pursued in order to fund these removal projects.

Kudzu has been identified within the Greenway and on adjacent properties. In an effort to control the growth of these invasive plants on public lands, the City of Tallahassee, in cooperation with Leon County and the State of Florida, is using sheep in an innovative management project. The pilot project underway will run for approximately five years, with annual renewal based on project evaluation. A flock of 500 to approximately 1,000 sheep is being used to eliminate selected vegetation at Tom Brown Park, the Lafayette Heritage Trail, the Phipps-Overstreet Greenway, the Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway, and under City electric transmission lines.

The flock of sheep is kept in various places as space permits, including the J.R. Alford Greenway, and is managed by a shepherd 24 hours a day. The shepherd has a herding dog to assist in moving the flock, and a guard dog to keep coyotes and other predators away. The flock is being contained by an electric fence or stock fence during the day and stays in a temporary corral at night. The sheep stay in one area for two or three days, depending on the density of the vegetation. The flock is expected to graze four or five acres per day (approximately one mile of right-of-way) every six or seven days. A "multi-pass" method is being used to eliminate regrowth of selected vegetation. The sheep graze an area once and then return to the same area later for additional grazing. This eliminates or reduces any new shoots, which causes the tubers to use up their starch reserves and die off.

#### Educational Programs

A volunteer effort will be made to provide for regular and special education events, such as interpretive hikes, native wildflower research, introduction of native species, development of butterfly meadows or other native faunal habitats, development of full-color field guides for native plants, birds and other wildlife, and instructional programs involving Leon County Extension Services and Leon County Schools. Additional program assistance will be sought from TEAM GREEN, an Office of Greenways and Trails environmental education program.

In addition, the J.R. Alford Greenway will be nominated for inclusion in to the Great Florida Birding Trail, a program of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, supported in part by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Wildlife Foundation of Florida. The Trail is a 2000-mile highway trail which unifies existing and new birding sites throughout Florida. Modeled after the successful Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, this project combines special highway signs identifying Birding Trail sites with a detailed map showcasing birding opportunities in Florida. The Trail will consist of a series of clusters, each containing 5-10 sites highlighting communities and special ecosystems like the Lake Wales Ridge.

As of mid-November 2000, the East Florida Section of the Trail is open and available for use. Subsequent sections of the Trail will come online at 18-month intervals, in the following order: West Florida, Panhandle Florida and finally, the south Florida Section. The entire statewide trail will be completed by 2006.

## **Plant and Animal Community Management Practices**

This section of the management plan is taken from the J.R. Alford Greenway Forest Stewardship Management Plan prepared by Stan Rosenthal of the Leon County Extension Service and Wayne Harris of the Florida Wildlife Commission. This plan should be consulted in full for these management practices and additional related information.

### Timber

Silvicultural activities will involve maintaining a natural diversity of plant communities. Longleaf pine which historically occurred in greater numbers will be reestablished on some of the uplands. Invasive exotics will be controlled throughout. Prescribed fire and selection cutting will be the main management tools in upland stands. Herbicide treatments and hand planting should be utilized where other methods are inadequate, or if prescribed fire cannot be done in areas where the risk of smoke or fire is too great on adjacent human populations and development.

### Wildlife

Wildlife management will involve maintaining many of the naturally occurring plant and animal communities by utilizing prescribed fire on upland sites. Featured species being managed for include both game and non-game native wildlife. Upland stands will be maintained with early growing season (February-June) prescribed fires on a two to three year frequency. Permanent openings will be established at the inter-face between upland and wetland communities as well as in specified areas within upland stands. Portions of these openings will be planted to various wildflowers, small grains, and legumes to provide a supplemental food sources for resident wildlife species while enhancing aesthetics and wildlife viewing opportunities. Maintenance of the unplanted portions of the openings will be accomplished by mowing and seasonal soil disturbance. Mowing should be conducted September through February to avoid disruption of ground nesting species, such as turkey and quail. Fireline maintenance should be conducted during the winter months when soil disturbance encourages the production of beneficial native food plants such as partridge pea, milk pea, and beggerweed. Under-stocked upland sites will be reestablished to longleaf pine by natural regeneration with reinforcement plantings. This species of pine will be most conducive to ensuring adequate forage production through the use of prescribed fire. During reforestation efforts as many standing snags as possible shall be left standing for the benefit of cavity nesting species. Pets must be on a leash to avoid killing and harassing wildlife. Stray cats and dogs should be reported to the proper authorities for removal.

### Aesthetics

Natural forests and pastoral agricultural areas, including wildflower meadows, will be promoted for a high visual quality. Special attention will be given to preserving already existing viewsapes for both road and park users.

### Recreation

There are abundant opportunities for hiking, birdwatching, wildlife viewing, bicycling, and horseback riding. Establishment of trails, utilizing existing logging roads and construction of boardwalks across wetland sites will facilitate access to the property as a whole, without

inhibiting natural water fluctuation. Along trails, interpretive signs will allow users to identify flora and other points of interest. management of openings by planting to wildflowers and wildlife forages will also increase viewing opportunities.

### Agriculture

Various types of agriculture have had impacts on the land, and some of these are considered desirable. Sometimes other management techniques can achieve the same results. These may include mowing and discing.

## **Other Management Practices**

### Archaeological Resources

Any archaeological resources discovered onsite will be preserved *in situ* and protected consistent with the Department of State's Division of Historical Resources rules and recommendations. Table 2 indicates archaeological sites recorded during the 2002 Survey. Appendix I includes a set of Archaeological Site Recommendations to be followed if any new sites and/or resources are discovered.

Table 2. Archaeological Sites Recorded during the Alford Arm Survey<sup>4</sup>

Florida Site #	New or Updated	Site Name	Description	Recommendations
8LE4295	New	Alford Arm Site 1	Prehistoric lithic & late 19 <sup>th</sup> /early 20 <sup>th</sup> century historic artifact scatter	No further work
8LE4296	New	Alford Arm Site 2	Prehistoric ceramic scatter, possible feature	Preserve, conduct additional testing
8LE4297	New	Alford Arm Site 3	Low density prehistoric artifact scatter	No further work
8LE4298	New	Alford Arm Site 4	Low density prehistoric ceramic scatter	No further work
8LE4299	New	Alford Arm Site 5	Low density prehistoric ceramic scatter	No further work
8LE4300	New	Alford Arm Site 6	Low density prehistoric ceramic scatter	No further work
8LE4301	New	Alford Arm Site 7	Prehistoric lithic & late 19 <sup>th</sup> /early 20 <sup>th</sup> century historic artifact scatter	No further work
8LE148A	Update	Block-Stern Site— Apalachee Hill	Prehistoric artifact scatter	Preserve
8LE826	Update	Chaires Massacre Site?	Low density Native American ceramic and 19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> century homestead	Preserve, conduct additional testing
8LE827	Update	Alford Arm Site	Prehistoric, mission, historic period site	Preserve, conduct additional testing
8LE828	Update	Wild Cherry Site	Low density prehistoric ceramic scatter	Preserve, conduct additional testing
8LE896	Update	No name	Low density prehistoric artifact scatter	No further work
A.O. #1	New	N/A	Single lithic flake	No further work
A.O. #2	New	N/A	Two prehistoric ceramics from single shovel test in a disturbed context	No further work
A.O. #3	New	N/A	Single lithic flake	No further work

<sup>4</sup> Michael R. Clark and Thomas Gunter, Southeastern Archaeological Research, Inc., *An Archaeological Survey of Alford Arm, Leon County, Florida*. July 2002.

Signage will be placed specifying that disturbance of any cultural sites or removal of artifacts shall be prohibited, unless prior authorization has been obtained from the Division of Historical Resources. These signs shall state that disturbing sites is a criminal offense and include a telephone number to report vandalism.

#### Prohibited Activities

The managing entity reserves the right to prohibit any such activities which may jeopardize or impede the public safety or enjoyment of the general public on the property; threaten or harm the natural resources of the property; or interfere with the privacy of adjacent landowners.

#### Site identification

The park will be identified as the J.R. Alford Greenway. All literature will identify the Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenway and Trails, the Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway, and the Leon County Board of County Commissioners as contributing to the creation of this park, and will state that the Greenway is managed by the Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation.

#### Management Agreements

Management agreements for grass management and special event or other temporary concessions as described above are planned. These agreements will be assigned to Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway for management purposes.

#### Access

Public vehicular access will be at one public parking area located just within the park at the southern end of Pedrick Road trailheads. All access points will have directional, informational and regulatory signage. No access will be provided across the existing embankments built across the Alford Arm. Fencing surrounding parking areas will help prevent unauthorized motorized vehicles from using park trails.

#### Easements

Several easements are located within and adjacent to the Greenway. A 60-foot wide access easement runs along the southern boundary of the Greenway, adjacent to the CSX railroad right of way, and northward along the western boundary of the Greenway. A 30' by 140' drainage easement extends onto the Greenway from the western boundary, north of where Pedrick Road terminates at the Greenway. This easement receives overflow from a residential development stormwater pond adjacent to the western side of the Greenway.

#### Maintenance

The Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation, with volunteer assistance, will provide for trail cleaning, pruning, and upkeep; sign repair and repainting; trail blazing; mowing of trails; mowing of fields in accordance with agricultural plan; control of exotic plant and other species; and boardwalk and building maintenance.

All prescription burns will be strictly conducted by trained professionals with at least one certified burner by the Florida Division of Forestry (DOF) in accordance with the forestry stewardship plan, a completed burn plan, and all DOF-required permits. Where prescribed burning is not feasible nor desirable, mechanical harvesting of undesirable materials shall be conducted.

Smoke-sensitive areas include the public Swift Creek Middle School and all neighborhoods adjacent to or in close proximity to the west and north of the park. Firelines will be established and maintained around the perimeter of the property. Natural breaks, roads, and trails will be used where possible. Cutting firelines in wet areas will be avoided, as this could be damaging to wetlands. Authorization from the Florida Division of Forestry must be acquired before burning. Fireline establishment and maintenance services can be obtained from this department as well.

In addition, a forestry consultant will be considered as necessary to assist with prescribed burning. A "burn plan" will be completed prior to prescribed burning. This burn plan will require the notification of adjacent and other affected subdivisions and neighborhoods, including signage and other means of communication as necessary and/or appropriate. A public meeting will be held as far in advance as reasonable of any burning activities are conducted in order to communicate the need for burning specific tracts, natural communities, or other areas, and to solicit and respond to any public concerns or comments.

Exotic plant species shall be controlled or eliminated where feasible with the use of sheep as previously described and/or by other means, including fire, herbicides, and mechanical or hand removal.

### Security

The primary security will be provided by the Leon County Sheriff's Office. Additional security measures will include perimeter fences, lockable gates preventing motorized vehicles, and posted hours of operation, which will be from sunup to sundown. A public telephone will be installed at each established parking areas within the Greenway. Neighborhood watch committees will be requested to consider expanding their programs by the Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway.

## **Administration**

### Staffing

Paid staffing for the Greenway will be provided by the Leon County Parks and Recreation Division. The Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway citizens organization will help provide volunteers for park construction, maintenance, and special projects.

### Event Coordination

A volunteer effort will be made through the Friends and other local community groups to encourage use of the park for special bike-ped and equestrian events, fairs, interpretive hikes, and symposia.

### Adjacent land use coordination

The Leon County Parks and Recreation Division and the Friends of the J.R. Alford Greenway will maintain contact with adjacent land owners regarding any changes in land uses and/or Greenway activities.

## **SCHEDULES AND FUNDING**

### **Priority Schedule and Cost Estimates for Management Activities**

A timetable of animal and plant community management activities is included in the J.R. Alford Greenway Forest Stewardship Management Plan (2002). A copy of this schedule is included as Appendix G.

The proposed recreational improvements schedule is shown in Table 3. Native plantings will take place seasonally.

The Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation will provide the necessary machinery and manpower to implement most of the major improvements, and will contract out those services that the Division or volunteers cannot properly handle because of time, personnel, and/or safety issues.

### **Funding**

Leon County, the land manager, appropriated \$25,000 in 2002 for initial development of the Greenway. Portions of these funds have been used to build parking areas and conduct field surveys. An additional \$100,000 was appropriated through FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails grants in 2001 and 2002. These funds have been used for maintenance tasks, capital improvements, and archaeological surveys. Additional funds for longleaf pine restoration and management are available from the Leon County "tree bank" mitigation account.

Cost estimates for animal and plant community management activities are presented in Table 4.

**Table 3: Proposed Improvements Schedule.**

	April 2002	July 2002	Oct. 2002	Jan. 2003	April 2003	July 2003	Oct. 2003	Jan. 2004
<b>PHASE 1</b>								
Biological Survey	X							
Parking Areas		X						
Portable Toilets (all trailheads)		X						
Trail Benches, Gazebos, and/or Shelters				X				
Information Kiosk		X						
Signage					X			
Picnic Tables, Trash Cans			X					
Water Fountain			X					
Watering Trough				X				
Multi-use Trails				X				
Bicycling/Hiking Trails				X				
Wildlife Observation Platform					X			
Boardwalks							X	
Native Plantings				X	X	X	X	X

**Table 4: Cost Estimates for Animal and Plant Community Management Activities.<sup>5</sup>**

	Cost/Unit	No. of Units	Frequency	Totals
Blue Bird Boxes	\$10/box	40 boxes	Once	\$400
Wildflower Plantings	\$400/acre	2 acres	every 3-5 years	\$800
Mowing	\$20/acre	97 acres	8-13 times/year	\$15K-25K
Mowing	\$20/acre	32 acres	every 3 years	\$300
Prescribed Burning	\$11 to \$20/acre <sup>6</sup>	267 acres	every 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	\$3K
Buffer Plantings	\$100/acre	5 acres	once	\$500
Invasive Exotic Control (excludes Kudzu)	\$500/acre	425 acres	frequent	\$50K

<sup>5</sup> Stan Rosenthal, University of Florida/Leon County Cooperative Extension Service.

<sup>6</sup> The low end of this range is average for rural areas in the Southeast, and the higher end is average for area near urban developments. The costs for prescribed fire will vary according to the degree of added preparations and protections made necessary by nearby development and/or population sensitivity to smoke. These costs do not include any added fire protection by the City of Tallahassee Fire Department. At this time, the costs of any involvement in a standby mode by TFD would not be borne by Leon County.